



THE ASSESSMENT OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SKILLS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Original scientific paper

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Received: 2022/12/28

Accepted: 2023/02/20

ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the classroom management skills of primary school teachers who teach in primary schools in the Municipality of Prizren. The study also aims to determine whether classroom management skills vary depending on the gender, work experience, and their level of education. For the chosen topic, quantitative approach/method was applied. The sample of the study consists of 307 teachers from different public and private schools, including schools in urban and rural areas of the Municipality of Prizren. To collect the data for the research problem, we used the survey technique with its instrument, the questionnaire for primary school teachers. The Mann Whitney U Test analysis was used to see among which groups there are differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and their teaching experiences. Whereas, to see among which groups there are differences, between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and their teaching experience as well as between the level of the classes where they teach, the Kruskal Wallis H Test was used. The conclusions from the analysis show that there are significant differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and the gender of teachers and teachers' experience.

Keywords: Management, skills, classroom, teachers

INTRODUCTION

Classroom management consists of many interrelated and complex dimensions that stem from the classroom and the environment. Fayol (1970) considered that management consists of five functions: planning, organization, leadership, coordination and control. The teacher, as a classroom manager, is expected to lead the classroom as an orchestra by considering these dimensions. According to Lemlech (1988), these are the dimensions of classroom management: the dimension of physical environment management; the dimension of teaching process management; the dimension of time management;

the dimension of effective management; the dimension of behavior management; the motivation dimension and the communication dimension. Being able to divide the class into smaller units will ease the issue of classroom management. The main features of managing the physical environment according to Ming-tak and Wai-shing include the organization of floor space, walls, desk, shelves, closet space as well as the classroom environment in general. The seating plan also plays a very important role in the management of the physical environment; it can be organized in rows or columns, in circular form and long rows

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that serve different purposes (Hue & Li, 2008). All good teachers have some sort of plan when they enter their classrooms. Determining what to teach students, in what order and for how long are the basic components of planning. The lesson plan serves as a map or checklist that guides us to know what we want to do next; these sequences of activities remind us our lessons' goals and objectives for our students (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Working as a teacher requires excellent time management skills. Teachers must balance between the long-term goals of the classroom, the immediate educational needs of students, and the voluminous paperwork that comes with each assignment. Between preparing lesson plans, assessing, and teaching, teachers often find it impossible to fit everything into the given time frame (Bates, 2020). Effective classroom management is no different from any other activity or sport that requires participants to follow rules in order to be successful (Yisrael, 2012). When we ask teachers in general what they mean by classroom management, the answers we often get are order, control and discipline. The idea that classroom management is primarily about discipline is a misconception held by teachers that can actually be confused with effective teaching. In fact, effective managers organize their classrooms in such a way that they avoid most behavioral problems and therefore they often have no concerns about discipline (Garrett, 2014). Classroom management is more about preventing problems than solving them, thus reducing the need for intervention (Brophy, 1999). The most helpful thing teachers can do to address problem behavior is to prevent it in the first place. Introducing, modeling and reinforcing positive social behavior is an important step in a student's educational experience. Students are shown the expectations that the school has for their behavior and if they are praised when they behave according to the rules, their behavior will be strengthened in a positive direction (Markja, Mastror, & Janaqi, 2019). Another variable that affects teachers' classroom management skills is the level of motivation (Çerkezi, 2015). Teachers' motivation levels are closely related to the quality of education. Research indicated that motivation level of teachers is positively related to teaching approaches and teaching methods. Based on these studies, it is thought that the motivation level of the teachers can be related to the classroom management profiles. Teachers who are motivated and good classroom managers are also good motivators for their students (Ihtiyaroğlu, 2019). In his book "Motivating Students to Learn" Jere Brophy (2004) states that, students will not respond well to

motivational attempts if they are fearful, resentful, or focused on negative emotions within the classroom. To create conditions that favor your motivational efforts you have to establish and manage your classroom as a learning community, a place where students come primarily to learn, and succeed in doing so, through collaboration with you and their classmates. In communication process, teachers can meet the needs in terms of motivation, knowledge, self-reliance, relationships with others or the teacher may cause students to suffer from unwillingness, loss of confidence, belonging and communication desire (Jones, 2007). In the light of many studies, it can be concluded that the communication skills of the teachers are related to their classroom management skills and support both, the development of students and their individual development (Ihtiyaroğlu, 2019). Under the framework of what was mentioned above, the paper aims to identify the classroom management skills of teachers (the dimension of physical environment management; the dimension of teaching management; the dimension of time management; the dimension of effective management; the dimension of behavior management; the dimension of motivation and the dimension of communication), who teach in primary schools in the Municipality of Prizren. The paper also aims to determine whether classroom management skills differ depending on gender, work experience and their level of education. In accordance with the general purpose, answers to the following questions were sought: What is the level of classroom management skills of primary school teachers in the Municipality of Prizren? Are there any differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and their gender, work experience and level of education?

METHODOLOGY

For the researched problem, the descriptive research method was chosen from the quantitative approach since this method is more efficient to determine the current situation.

Sample

The research was carried out with teachers who work in primary schools in the Municipality of Prizren. Out of 593 teachers who teach in grades 1-5, from a random sample, about 307 teachers from various public and private schools participated in the research, including schools located in urban and rural areas of the mentioned municipality. Out of a total of 307 participants, 84.4% are female, while 15.6% are male. As for the educational level, 77.5% of teachers have completed the

Bachelor's level, 16.3% the Master's level and 6.2% have completed teachers college. Regarding work experience 21.5% of the respondents have 1-5 years of work experience, 15% have 6-10 years, 13.4% have 16-20 years, 14.3% have 21-25 years, and 19.9% have over 26 years of work experience.

Data collection

For the collection of sufficient data for the research, we used the survey technique with its instrument, the questionnaire for primary school teachers. The questionnaire entitled: "Classroom management for teachers", formulated by (Yukse & Duman, 2017), has been translated and adapted into the Albanian language. The questionnaire is composed of two parts. In the first part, the socio-demographic data of the respondents is requested, while in the second part, answers to 46 expressions are required, which are mainly related to classroom management skills. The questionnaire is of the "Likert" type with five categories "Never", "Rarely", "Sometimes", "Often", "Always". For the reliability of the questionnaire, the Kronbach alpha analysis was used. The

coefficient is quite high Kronbach alpha=0.86, this shows us that the instrument used is very reliable.

Data analysis

The collected data were transferred to the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) v.25, where they were processed. Initially, by means of the Kolmogrov-Smirnov test, from the data provided by the teachers, it was determined whether the data show a normal distribution or the opposite. The value obtained from the Kolmogrov-Smirnov test (Sig. =.000, $p > .05$) shows us that the data obtained from the teachers do not show a normal distribution. To understand among which groups there are differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and their gender, the Mann Whitney U Test was used. Whereas, in order to see among which groups there are differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and their experience in teaching as well as the level of education of the teachers, Kruskal Wallis H Test was used. The results are presented in tabular form and commented.

RESULTS

Table 1. Value of standard deviation and averages of classroom management skills.

	N	\bar{X}	Min.	Max.	SD
Physical arrangement of the classroom	307	4.50	2.33	5.00	0.376
Teaching process	307	4.45	3.29	5.00	0.350
Time management	307	4.46	3.40	5.00	0.318
Communication	307	4.73	3.86	5.00	0.240
Behavior management	307	4.63	3.33	5.00	0.329
Motivation	307	4.73	3.57	5.00	0.235
Assessment of classroom management skills	307	4.62	3.74	5.00	0.222

Table 1 shows the averages and standard deviation values related to classroom management skills. The highest averages, in equal values, are seen in the dimensions of communication ($x = 4.73$; $sd = 0.240$) and motivation ($x = 4.73$; $sd = 0.235$), while

the lowest average is noticed in the dimension of teaching process ($x = 4.45$; $sd = 0.350$). The overall mean of classroom management skills is centered on the "Always" option ($x = 4.62$; $sd = 0.222$).

Table 2. Differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and teachers' gender.

	Gender	N	\bar{X}	\bar{X} Rank	Mann Whitney U Test	
					U	p
Physical arrangement of the classroom	Female	259	4.6667	161.54	4.263	.000
	Male	48	4.5000	113.31		
Teaching process	Female	259	4.5714	154.92	5.976	.669
	Male	48	4.5714	149.01		
Time management	Female	259	4.8000	153.00	6.474	.638
	Male	48	4.8000	159.38		
Communication	Female	259	4.8571	156.72	5.511	.202
	Male	48	4.7143	139.31		
Behavior management	Female	259	4.6667	155.97	5.705	.358
	Male	48	4.6667	143.36		
Motivation	Female	259	4.8571	158.86	4.957	.023
	Male	48	4.7143	127.77		
Overall assessment	Female	259	4.6579	158.22	5.123	.053
	Male	48	4.5789	131.23		

Table 2 shows the results of the analysis of Mann-Whitney U test. The results show us that there are significant differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and teachers' gender. We find these differences in the physical arrangement dimension (U = 4.263, p = .000) and in the motivation dimension (U = 4.975, p = .023). In these two dimensions, female teachers have a higher average compared to male teachers.

Table 3. Differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and teachers' experience.

	Work experience	N	\bar{X}	Test	H	p
				Wallis H		
Physical arrangement of the classroom	1-5 years	66	4.6667	169.00	5.569	.350
	6-10 years	46	4.6667	166.86		
	11-15 years	41	4.5000	150.71		
	16-20 years	49	4.5000	135.48		
	21-25 years	44	4.5000	147.42		
	26 and above	61	4.5000	149.91		
Teaching process	1-5 years	66	4.5714	167.70	7.864	.164
	6-10 years	46	4.5714	158.35		
	11-15 years	41	4.4286	161.60		
	16-20 years	49	4.4286	129.29		
	21-25 years	44	4.4286	138.05		
	26 and above	61	4.5714	162.16		
Time management	1-5 years	66	4.8000	145.02	5.235	.388
	6-10 years	46	4.8000	165.23		
	11-15 years	41	4.8000	146.82		
	16-20 years	49	4.8000	167.01		
	21-25 years	44	4.6000	136.67		
	26 and above	61	4.8000	162.12		

Table 3. Differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and teachers' experience (cont.)

		26 and above	61	4.8000	162.12		
Communication	1-5 years	66	4.8571	181.82			
	6-10 years	46	4.7143	138.98			
	11-15 years	41	4.7143	148.59			
	16-20 years	49	4.8571	166.84	14.153	.015	
	21-25 years	44	4.7143	126.16			
	26 and above	61	4.8571	148.64			
Behavior management	1-5 years	66	4.6667	156.84			
	6-10 years	46	4.8333	159.45			
	11-15 years	41	4.6667	154.63			
	16-20 years	49	4.6667	156.35	8.383	.136	
	21-25 years	44	4.5833	120.70			
	26 and above	61	4.6667	168.52			
Motivation	1-5 years	66	4.8571	176.58			
	6-10 years	46	4.7143	139.70			
	11-15 years	41	4.8571	155.56			
	16-20 years	49	4.8571	168.92	11.390	.044	
	21-25 years	44	4.7143	129.25			
	26 and above	61	4.7143	145.17			
Overall assessment	1-5 years	66	4.7237	170.63			
	6-10 years	46	4.7105	157.78			
	11-15 years	41	4.6579	154.49			
	16-20 years	49	4.6053	146.11	6.128	.294	
	21-25 years	44	4.5789	129.78			
	26 and above	61	4.6579	156.63			

To identify the differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and teachers' experience, the Kruskal Wallis H Test was used. Differences were found in two dimensions, in the dimension of communication ($H=14.153$, $p=.015$) and in the dimension of motivation ($H=11,390$, $p=.044$). In the dimension of communication, teachers with 6-10 years of work experience as well as teachers with 21-25 years of work experience have a lower average compared

to teachers with 1-5 years of work experience, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, and more than 25 years of work experience. We notice that teachers who have 1-5 years of work experience have the highest average in the communication dimension. The same result also appears in the dimension of motivation. Even in this dimension, teachers who have less work experience have a higher average compared to teachers who have more work experience.

Table 4. Differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and their level of education

	Education level	N	\bar{X}	\bar{X} Rank	Kruskal Wallis H Test	
					H	p
Physical arrangement of the classroom	Teachers college	19	4.3333	104.68	6.618	0.37
	Bachelor	238	4.6667	156.24		
	Master	50	4.6667	162.08		
Teaching process	Teachers college	19	4.4286	134.24	15.840	.000
	Bachelor	238	4.4286	146.16		
	Master	50	4.7143	198.82		
Time management	Teachers college	19	4.8000	165.76	4.892	.087
	Bachelor	238	4.8000	148.29		
	Master	50	4.8000	176.73		
Communication	Teachers college	19	4.7143	131.16	9.371	.009
	Bachelor	238	4.7143	148.89		
	Master	50	4.8571	187.00		
Behavior management	Teachers college	19	4.6667	132.47	2.817	.254
	Bachelor	238	4.6667	152.45		
	Master	50	4.8333	169.54		
Motivation	Teachers college	19	4.7143	127.42	5.154	.076
	Bachelor	238	4.7143	151.53		
	Master	50	4.8571	175.88		
Overall assessment	Teachers college	19	4.5526	118.63	13.526	.001
	Bachelor	238	4.6316	148.64		
	Master	50	4.7763	192.93		

Table 4. shows the differences between the teachers' opinion regarding classroom management skills and their level of education. The differences are noticed in three dimensions, in the physical arrangement dimension (H=6.618, p=.037), in the teaching process (H=15.840,

p=.000) and in the communication dimension (H=9.371, p=.009). Teachers who have completed the Master's level have a higher average compared to teachers who have completed the Bachelor's level and Teachers College.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to identify the classroom management skills of primary school teachers who teach in primary schools in the Municipality of Prizren. The study also aims to determine whether classroom management skills vary depending on the gender, work

experience, and their level of education. The findings show us that the overall averages for each dimension of classroom management are at high levels. The teachers showed a higher average in the dimension of communication and motivation, while the average was lower in the dimension of the learning process and time management. High averages in the dimension of motivation and communication are good

indicators for good classroom management and successful teaching. According to research, there is a relationship between motivation and learning, a motivated student can have better results in school (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016; Santrock, 2001). Also, the teacher's verbal and non-verbal communication creates a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere for students, and this helps them to have self-confidence, which also increases participation and contribution to learning (Zeki, 2009). We can conclude that teachers control the physical conditions (temperature, light, noise) in the classroom. During the physical arrangement of the classroom, teachers often take into account the opinions of the students as well as the physical characteristics of the students when arranging their seating plan. Teachers also consider the individual differences of students in the teaching and learning process, they apply methods that allow students to participate actively in the teaching and learning process and they use technology sufficiently. Regarding the time dimension, teachers are punctual, start and finish lessons on time, use all their time for educational purposes, guide students to use their time effectively inside and outside the classroom, manage learning time based on activities and use time effectively during the teaching and learning process. Another important element is teacher-student communication, where we notice that teachers communicate with their students according to etiquette rules, use clear, simple, and understandable language during classroom communication. In addition to understandable language, teachers during classroom communication use body language, gestures, facial expressions as well as their voice. Teachers motivate their students at the beginning of the lesson. All students are encouraged by their teachers to participate in activities. The findings show that there are significant differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and teachers' gender. We find these differences in the dimension of physical arrangement and in the dimension of motivation. From this we can mean that female teachers pay more attention to the physical arrangement of the classroom compared to male teachers. Also, female teachers tend to motivate students more than male teachers. The fact that female teachers have a higher average compared to male teachers, may be that female teachers love children more, since they can potentially be mothers and therefore adopt their profession more. Also, the fact that female teachers prefer more the teaching profession and the more positive and moderate approach to their students, may have

been effective in showing such a change (Yukse & Duman, 2017). We also find similar results in the research conducted by Korkut and Babaođlan (2010), Özgan, Yiđit, Aydın, & Küllük (2011), Ayar & Arslan (2008), Zembat, Tunçeli, & Yavuz (2017). On the other hand, the conclusions drawn from the research done by Yüksel and Duman (2017), for the dimension of communication show the opposite, female teachers have lower average than male teachers. The conclusions of some research prove that there are no differences between the classroom management skills and the gender of the teachers (Okuz, Cevik, Baba, & Guven, 2011; Korkut & Babaođlan, 2010; Terzi, 2002). Another result from this research has to do with the differences between the classroom management skills and the work experience of the teachers. The general results show that there are no significant differences. The differences are found in two dimensions, in the dimension of communication and motivation. In the dimension of communication and motivation, teachers with 1-5 years, 16-20 years and 26 and more years of work experience, have a higher average compared to teachers who have 11-15 years and 21-25 years of work experience. Since, young teachers with work experience of 1-5 years, are at the beginning of their career, they can be more enthusiastic about their work, but they can also have the updated information from their recent studies. On the other hand, with the increase in years of work experience, classroom management skills also develop. In this context, teachers with more work experience may have gained classroom management skills from many years of teaching experience. Some of the research conducted shows that the levels of classroom management skills vary based on their work experience (Yüksel & Duman, 2017; Yasar Ekinci, Günhan, & Anılan, 2017; Yilmaz & Aydin, 2012; Toran & Akkus, 2016). The differences between teachers' opinions regarding classroom management skills and education level are present in three dimensions: in the dimension of physical arrangement, in the dimension of the teaching process and in the dimension of communication. Teachers who have completed the Master's level have a higher average compared to teachers who have completed the Bachelor's level and Teachers college. This may be as a result of the additional subjects they attended at the master's level. However, since in other dimensions of management there are no statistically significant differences between teachers who have a bachelor's degree in education and teachers who have a master's degree, it recalls the idea that there are not

many differences between the subjects taught in bachelor's and master's studies. However, we should not overlook the fact that the number of respondents plays an important role, since a higher percentage of respondents have a bachelor's level of education. Therefore, it is welcome to carry out research where a large number of teachers with different level of studies participate, but also with an approximate number. In some research, the results have shown that there are no differences between classroom management skills and the level of education of teachers (Zembat, Tunçeli, & Yavuz, 2017; Yalçinkaya & Tombul, 2002). In the research that can be developed in the future related to this topic, it is necessary to include a larger number of teachers along with additional variables. In further research, it would be more advantageous to use other research approaches and methods, through which more generalizable results could be obtained. Also, for the sample to be as representative as possible, the participation of subjects from different parts of Kosovo would be fine. In addition to the teachers, it would be welcome to also take into consideration the opinions of the students.

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